REMARKS FOR ADMINISTRATOR BOLDEN
"*THE MARTIAN*" EDUCATION/ENGAGEMENT EVENT
Sept. 17, 2015

It's so great to be here today and feel all the excitement about NASA's Journey to Mars. I want to thank author Andy Weir for his story, The Martian, and his dedication to getting it right. I want to thank our friends at 20th Century Fox for also wanting to get it right and for recognizing what a great opportunity we have with the opening of this film to talk about our real life Journey to Mars unfolding right now, today, in so many ways across NASA. It's important for the people of this country and around the world to feel that inspiration and join us on the journey.

This ambitious goal involves everything we do. It will transform technology and define our generation. Each of you in the NASA workforce is part of the journey through your passion and your dedication to what you do.

It’s your dedication, motivation and drive that keep NASA moving forward, not just with momentum, but also with precision and focus. We are farther down the path to sending humans to Mars than at any point in NASA's history.

We have a lot of work to do to get humans to Mars, but we'll get there. Boots on Mars is possibly the most exciting thing humans will ever do and I love that we’re here today talking not only about what we want and need to do for that goal, but the ways we've already started the work to get there.

You know, much of what we do today was science fiction when I was growing up. We have many accomplishment of which we can be proud, such as people living and working in space – which we’ve been doing now for almost 15 years – or sending a spacecraft out of the solar system; or one to visit Pluto; or planning an actual human trip to the Red Planet. So I have no doubt that we can accomplish what we have set our minds to do.

Today, you have a chance to hear from the experts. These men and women can tell you what is going on right now and where we're going next. They'll discuss where our knowledge gaps are and what we're doing to fill them.

Earlier this week, cast members from *The Martian* talked with astronauts living on the International Space Station, including Scott Kelly, who just passed his half-way point during his one-year mission aboard the Station, a mission that's gathering critical data needed for future human missions to Mars. They heard first-hand how that laboratory is working on science off Earth, for Earth. The actors saw the International Space Station training facility, heard from the team working on planetary rovers, learned about the Space Launch System rocket and the *Orion* spacecraft and visited the Mission Control Center where flight controllers provide support for Space Station research and operations.

As most of you know, that's just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to all we do at NASA. Our *Martian* guests saw how we're incorporating the technologies that enable exploration into tools for understanding Earth right now – new knowledge that will inform future Mars explorers.

This is our story. This is our journey to Mars. It's the real stuff of science, technology and human spaceflight.

Earlier this week we launched "*The Real Martians"* web page where you can see videos of your fellow employees telling their stories and how they are supporting the journey to Mars. It's going to be updated three times each week with new videos, so visit early and often.

I'm looking forward to hearing the questions you have today and to talking some more with Andy and Jim Green, who is maybe our head Martian here at NASA. Today we take part in an ongoing dialogue about what it's going to take to get humans to Mars.

I know it invigorates me every single day on the job to work on one of the biggest things humanity has ever attempted and I think it's this generation's moment – the chance for the next giant leap.

A child today that was born less than 15 years ago has never known a time when humans didn't have the Internet or live in space. They are the space generation. They're the ones who are going to set down on the Red Planet for the first time.

Our first Martians are in school right now and this movie and all of the missions they see NASA flying could be what pushes them firmly in the direction of a career in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. We want to encourage them to pursue careers that will enable our journey and keep America the leader in space.

That kind of inspiration is probably one of the most potent things we can provide to the next generation, in addition to a strong foundation on which to build their own accomplishments. That's what we're doing right now, so let's get started and hear more about it.

First, let's hear from two NASA employees working on our journey to Mars about how they see that work reflected in "*The Martian"*.

With us are, Alexander MacDonald, Program Executive for Emerging Space in the Office of our Chief Technologist and Tara Ruttley, Associate ISS Program Scientist in the Office of the Chief Scientist. Take it away, Alexander and Tara!